

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 EB-07 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 SAJ-01 OMB-01 NIC-01 CU-02

IO-10 TRSE-00 /088 W

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R 251620Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4959

INFO USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR CH MO

SUBJ: VISIT OF MOROCCAN FOREIGN MINISTER LARAKI TO PRC

REFS: A) RABAT 1391 B) HONG KONG 3066

1. GOM FOREIGN MINISTER AHMED LARAKI LEFT PRC MARCH 21 AFTER SIX-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT WHICH TOOK HIM TO PEKING, NANKING, SOOCHOW AND SHANGHAI. LARAKI WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DELEGATION LARGELY COMPOSED OF ECONOMIC SPECIALISTS. HIGHLIGHTS OF VISIT WERE LARAKI'S MEETING WITH PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI MARCH 17 AND SIGNING OF TRADE AND AID ACCORDS DISCUSSED IN REFTELS.

2. LOCAL PRESS REPORTED TRIP FACTUALLY, NOTING CORDIALITY OF LARAKI'S RECEPTION IN ALL FOUR CITIES BUT SHEDDING LITTLE LIGHT ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE TALKS WITH CHOU OR ON PROVISIONS OF ACCORDS. GOM HAS MAINTAINED OFFICIAL SILENCE ON THE VISIT AND NO JOINT COMMUNIQUE HAS APPEARED AS OF EVENING MARCH 24.

3. COMMENT: AS IS GENERALLY CASE WITH VISITS OF THIS KIND, LITTLE OF SUBSTANCE ON WHAT TRANSPIRED DURING LARAKI'S LONG
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CHINESE INTERLUDE HAS BEEN GIVEN TO LOCAL PRESS. THUS, FOCUS

HAS BEEN ALMOST ENTIRELY ON CEREMONIAL ASPECTS OF VISIT.
GENERALLY SPEAKING, JOURNEY HAS GIVEN RISE TO MINIMAL SPECULATION AND APPEARS TO US TO HAVE SPARKED LITTLE INTEREST HERE.

4. GOM'S NUMBER ONE SUBJECT, SPANISH SAHARA AND NORTHERN ENCLAVES, RECEIVED ONLY PASSING MENTION ALTHOUGH WE IMAGINE LARAKI MADE NEW PITCH FOR SUPPORT ON THIS ISSUE. ACCORDING TO PRESS, LOCAL CHINESE AUTHORITIES IN PROVINCIAL CITIES MENTIONED MATTER IN MOST INDIRECT FASHION, BUT THIS WAS ONLY REFERENCE TO IT REPORTED DURING VISIT.

5. NEVERTHELESS, AS REFTEL B SUGGESTS, VISIT INDICATES SOME WIDENING OF MOROCCAN-CHINESE RELATIONS. WE HAVE HEARD THAT SPORTS COMPLEX WAS FIRST PROPOSED IN 1969 AND HAD BEEN STALLED BY GOM. IF IT IS AS LARGE AS PUBLICATIONS CITED REFTEL B SAY, IT WILL BE MAJOR LANDMARK ON RABAT SCENE. OTHER PROGRAMS ALSO APPEAR TO BE FIRSTS FOR THIS COUNTRY.

6. IT IS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS AT THIS POINT HOW LARAKI'S RELATIVELY LONG AND LEISURELY VISIT BEARS ON GOM'S APPROACH TO BROADER SUBJECT OF FAR EAST RELATIONS. THERE HAS BEEN NO RECENT SIGN OF CHANGE IN GOM'S RELATIVELY FAVORABLE PAST ATTITUDE ON VIET-NAM AND KHMER ISSUES, BUT NEXT GO ROUND ON SEATING IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS MAY PROVIDE ACID TEST OF GOM'S INTENT. SOUTH KOREAN EMBASSY HERE PREDICTABLY VIEWS LARAKI'S VISIT TO CHINA AS OMINOUS SIGNAL OF POSSIBLE FORTHCOMING GOM REASSESSMENT OF TIES WITH PRO-WESTERN REGIMES IN REGION. WHILE PRECIPITOUS CHANGE IN GOM POLICY UNLIKELY IN OUR VIEW, GOM IS NO DOUBT FOLLOWING SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA CLOSELY AND WILL ALSO BE KEEPING AN EYE ON THE ATTITUDES OF MODERATE ARAB AND AFRICAN BRETHREN.
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